



*Stephanie Rawlings-Blake*  
Mayor

## PLANNING COMMISSION

*Wilbur E. "Bill" Cunningham, Chairman*

### STAFF REPORT



*Thomas J. Stosur*  
Director

**March 20, 2014**

**REQUEST:** Key Highway South Urban Renewal Plan – 1301 Boyle Street/Riverside Wharf – Signage Waiver Request

Key Highway South Urban Renewal Plan – 1301 Boyle Street/Riverside Wharf – Revised Final Design Approval – Signage

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval.

**STAFF:** Anthony Cataldo

**PETITIONER:** Caves Valley Partners

**OWNER:** same

#### **HISTORY**

- The Key Highway East Industrial Area Urban Renewal Plan was established by Ordinance 87-989, dated June 29, 1987
- The Key Highway Waterfront Study was approved by the Planning Commission on May 1, 2008, which includes the subject properties.
- City Council Bill #08-0028 and #08-0029 which amended the Key Highway East Industrial URP and rezoned some properties from Industrial to B-2-4 was approved by the Planning Commission on August 7, 2008.
- City Council Bill #11-0674 amended the Key Highway Urban Renewal Plan to adjust the boundary line and remove two parcels to be included within the new Key Highway South URP was approved by the Planning Commission on June 2, 2011.
- City Council Bill #11-0675 repealed the Key Highway East Industrial Urban Renewal Plan and replaced it with the Key Highway South URP. This item was approved by the Planning Commission on June 2, 2011.
- On April 5, 2012 the Planning Commission Approved the Final Design for the Riverside Wharf building at 1301 Boyle Street.

## **CONFORMITY TO PLANS**

This project conforms to the bulk, massing, and design goals of the Key Highway South Urban Renewal Plan. It is also consistent with the Comprehensive Master Plan's LIVE section, Goal Two: Elevate the Design and Quality of the City's Built Environment, Objective One: Improve Design Quality of Baltimore's Built Environment.

## **SITE/GENERAL AREA**

General Area: The Key Highway South URP area is generally from the intersection of Key Highway East extension and Key Highway north to the intersection of Clement St. and Key Highway. The properties included within the URP are those along the waterfront as well as landside beginning from Webster St. south to the alley between Woodall St. and Key Highway as it travels under the over pass.

Site Conditions: The site is approximately .0966 acres and zoned B-2-4. The current site is under construction for the approved 3 level mixed use building.

## **ANALYSIS**

The Key Highway South Urban Renewal Plan sets forth many design goals and specific redevelopment bulk and massing design guidelines. 1301 Boyle Street is located within the Landside Area A development zone. Area A includes properties which directly face Key Highway and are situated below the elevation of the existing neighborhood.

### **Building Design Guidelines – Sign Guidelines**

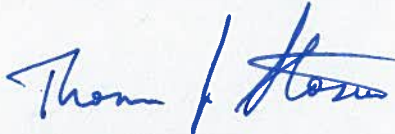
Signage guidelines are part of the Urban Renewal Plan and all signs located above the second floor of a building are subject to approval of the Planning Commission. The Development team, in working with the tenants and the Department of Planning design staff, would like to propose eight signs that are located flat against the building but above the second floor.

This building was designed to include a ground level retailer and two levels of office use above. In order to meet the needs of the office users above the ground level, the development team is seeking a waiver of the provision that 'no sign identifying individual tenants in a multi-tenant building may exceed 25 square feet.' Six of the 25 signs exceed the 25 square feet maximum. The proposal is still well below the allowable signage area for the site and the development team has worked with Planning Staff on the sign proposal for this building.

As outlined in section C (1) (a) (4), the Director of Planning may request that the Planning Commission waive compliance with one or more of the standards and controls in the 'Design Guidelines' section of the plan, provided the proposed waivers do not adversely affect the objectives enumerated in section 'B-Urban Renewal Objectives' or Section I in the 'Design Guidelines,' for the Key Highway South Urban Renewal Plan Area. The signage requirements are located within the Design Guidelines. Planning staff is comfortable with the proposed signage plan and agrees that it is in keeping with the URP objective to facilitate the physical transformation of the area from industrial land uses to a premier waterfront residential and commercial mixed-use development. It also establishes a framework for new development that

respects the existing neighborhood context by preserving visual links to the harbor and promoting buildings that are of boulevard scale.

**Staff Notification:** The development team notified the Key Highway Community Association, Locust Point Civic Association, and Riverside Neighborhood Association, those neighborhoods most impacted by the proposed signage, of the proposed signage waiver request and provided them elevations for comment on January 29, 2014 in order to fulfill the 30 day community comment period. Prior to this hearing, staff notified the Key Highway Task Force.



**Thomas J. Stosur**  
**Director**